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E.O. 12065: GDS 9/18/85 (AMSTUTZ, J. BRUCE) -OR-M
TACS: FINS PILOT AF
SUBJECT: SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE AFGHANISTAN POLITICAL CRISIS

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT).

2. I THINK IT MUST BE QUITE EVIDENT TO THE DEPT AND ADDRESSEE POSTS THAT WE ARE WITNESSING A VERY SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL CRISIS IN AFGHANISTAN. IN THIS REGARD, I WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT SOME ASPECTS AND SHARE SOME PERSONAL THOUGHTS:

11 -- THE CRISIS IS NOT OVER. AT THIS POINT IN TIME THE
LOYALTY OF THE DRA MILITARY UNITS IN SUCH AREAS
AS GHANZI, KANDAHAR AND KUNDUZ IS NOT CLEAR, AND THERE ARE WIDE-
SPREAD REPORTS (AND SOME EVIDENCE) THAT THE THREE DEPOSED
MILITARY FIGURES IN THE CABINET (KATANJAR, GULABZOI, AND MAZDOORYAR)
HAVE MANAGED TO ESCAPE THE CITY AND ARE AT LARGE. IT IS QUITE
POSSIBLE THAT CIVIL WAR AMONG MAJOR DRA MILITARY UNITS COULD
ENSUE, LED BY PRO-TARAKI OR OTHERWISE ANTI-AMIN ELEMENTS. 199
WE IN KABUL, WE ARE VERY MUCH AWARE THAT THE POLITICAL
SITUATION REMAINS TENSE. MAJOR STREETS ADJACENT TO IMPORTANT
MINISTRIES REMAIN BLOCKED OFF TO REGULAR TRAFFIC, AND HERE AT
THE CHANCERY, MANNED SOVIET-BUILT TANKS ARE STATIONED ASTRIDE
THE THREE STREETS BORDERING THE EMBASSY PROPERTY. WE CAN'T
ENTER OR EXIT BY THE FRONT GATE BECAUSE THE STREET IS CLOSED,
SO WE ARE USING OLD EMERGENCY BACK GATE, BUT DO SO UNDER
THE BARREL OF A LARGE T-62 TANK. IT IS ALL A BIT UNNERVING,
BUT SOMETHING CERTAINLY TO WRITE HOME TO OTHERS ABOUT.

-- FOR 18 MONTHS NOW WE HAVE WATCHED THIS MARXIST PARTY (PPDA) DEVOUR ITSELF. AN AFGHAN OFFICIAL LAST NIGHT QUIETLY DESCRIBED THE LEADERSHIP TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER AS A "BUNCH OF SCORPIONS BITING EACH OTHER TO DEATH." BY WAY OF ILLUSTRATION, THERE HAVE BEEN 23 CABINET CHANGES SINCE THE ORIGINAL LIST WAS PROMULGATED IN APRIL 1976. THE NUMBER OF DEPUTY MINISTER CHANGES HAS BEEN EVEN MORE: 34. PURGE AFTER PURGE HAS OCCURRED, AND ONE CAN'T HELP WONDER HOW THE REGIME MANAGES TO SURVIVE. PART OF THE ANSWER IS, OF COURSE, BRUTAL SUPPRESSION OF PERCEIVED OPPOSITION. THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS KILLED MAY HAVE REACHED 6,000, AND PROBABLY MORE-THAN FOUR TIMES THAT NUMBER HAVE BEEN IN AND OUT OF POLITICAL JAILS.

-- THE INSURGENCY DURING THIS CRISIS PERIOD HAS BEEN INEPT AND QUIESCENT. IT HAS NOT TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF THE POLITICAL CRISIS TO PUSH ITS ADVANTAGE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE WILL BRING. ANIN HAS AMAZINGLY SURVIVED PLOT AFTER PLOT AGAINST HIM. SURELY THE LAW OF AVERAGES SHOULD CATCH UP WITH HIM SOMEDAY. BUT THEN STALIN DIED IN BED. PERSONALLY, I WOULD GIVE HIM NO BETTER ODDS THAN 50 PER CENT TO SURVIVE IN POWER THIS CALENDAR YEAR. I GIVE HIS CHANCES OF DYING IN BED OF OLD AGE AS NIL. I WOULD, THOUGH, LAY HIGHER ODDS THAT THE PARTY ITSELF (CCPS) WILL SURVIVE IN CONTROL IN SOME FORM.

3. IT IS AN INTERESTING TIME TO BE IN MALOL. LET'S
WALK MORGOY GATE EAST.